

The Future of Higher Education in England

The Foundation for Science and Technology debate - 17th June, 2009

Global Future – optimism

3 Key Points

- International excellence
- Institutional Creativity
- Creativity and skills of our graduates

International Excellence

- We are 2nd in the world to the USA for Higher Education
- Highly attractive destination for international students
- 1% of world's population but 9% of publications and 13% of citations
- Citation impact: UK is ahead of US in health, biology, environment and physical sciences

Effective & Efficient

Publications per \$ 1m invested in research

UK	16.6
US	9.9
Japan	3.6

Importance of concentration of research funding

- Several Research Assessment Exercises have concentrated research funding over last 20 years in our best universities
- UK research performance has improved dramatically over this period
- This is being copied by China, Australia, Germany and France

The outcome of RAE 2008

- The research assessment exercise (RAE) 2008 reversed this trend
- Research funding from the RAE is now spread significantly more thinly
- This direction of travel is a long term mistake

Institutional Creativity

- Dual funding allows institutional leadership teams to invest in new developments and to build on existing strengths
- Examples of interdisciplinary research addressing problems of major societal importance
- Creating new knowledge of relevance to business and industry that fuels innovation

Professor Michael Arthur
Vice-Chancellor



Basic research is as important as applied research

Russell Group study of 123 cases of significant innovation from 16 member universities.

53% resulted from basic research, 47% from applied.

We must protect science funding, basic and applied.

Professor Michael Arthur
Vice-Chancellor



The graduates of research intensive universities

- We aim to produce outstanding graduates that have an impact on global society
- We want students to be inspired and to develop their full potential
- We focus on the relationship between research and education to help us achieve this

Research is central to education

- Students involved in the research process
- The excitement of understanding how knowledge is created and being involved in that process
- Becoming well versed in dealing with uncertainty and leading edge activity
- Teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills

The key products of a research intensive university

- New knowledge of value to society
- Research with global impact
- Innovation that fuels the economy
- Outstanding graduates that contribute widely

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This will be best served by

- Concentrating research funds appropriately
- Fostering an environment that supports institutional creativity
- Recognising the real long term benefits of a research led education

The consequences of getting it wrong

- Both barrels, both feet
- Loss of international pre-eminence
- Negative impact on the economy
- May be very difficult to recover